



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle_mountain_field.html

In Reply Refer To:

3809 (NVB0100)

NVN-067782

AUG 08 2012

Dear Interested Public:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Mount Lewis Field Office (MLFO) has prepared a Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) for the Ruby Hill Project (NVN-067782). The Ruby Hill Project is an existing mining operation located approximately 0.7 mile northwest of the town of Eureka, Nevada. The Project is located on both public land administered by the MLFO BLM and private land. Homestake Mining Company of California (Homestake) submitted to the BLM an amended Plan of Operations to expand an existing open pit gold and silver mining and processing operation.


Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA, the PEA identifies, describes and evaluates the potential impacts from the expansion activities and takes into consideration the specific resource protection measures identified for the Ruby Hill Project.

The proposed expansion would utilize the existing primary and secondary crushers, solution processing plant, and ancillary support facilities. The Plan of Operations includes the following activities: expansion of the existing open pit and pit activity area; lowering of the final pit bottom by 240 feet; inclusion of a conceptual process pond for future fluid management of heap drain down flows during closure; realignment of portions of the existing perimeter fence associated with the open pit expansion; increasing the authorized acreage of surface exploration related disturbance; expansion of the Class III landfill; and the establishment of a flexible mining and ore hauling timeline based on mining rates and economic conditions. Expansion activities would disturb approximately 34.3 acres of additional BLM-administered public land and approximately 72.3 acres of additional private land for a proposed surface disturbance total of 106.6 acres. The total of the existing and proposed surface disturbance for the Project would be 1,742.4 acres within the existing Project area.

The BLM is seeking public input on the PEA for the Ruby Hill Project. The PEA will be available for a 30-day public comment period beginning August 10, 2012, and closing September 10, 2012. Written comments on this PEA will be accepted at the above address or via email at BLM_NV_BMDO_RubyHillMineExpansion_EA@blm.gov until 4:30 p.m., September 10, 2012. The PEA can be viewed on the BLM Battle Mountain District website at: www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle_mountain_field.html. Copies of the PEA can be obtained by contacting the Battle Mountain BLM at the letterhead address above. In accordance with 43 CFR 3809.411(c), a copy of the Plan of Operations will also be available for review.

After the public review period has ended, comments will be analyzed and considered as part of the decision-making process. If you have any questions or comments regarding this PEA, please contact Tessa Teems, Planning and Environmental Coordinator, at (775) 635-4000.

Sincerely,



Tessa A. Dixon

for Christopher J. Cook
Field Manager
Mount Lewis Field Office